

Welcome to Yongsan Garrison

By Col. Ron Stephens

USAG-Yongsan Commander

United States Army Garrison-Yongsan is home to nearly 25,000 U.S. military personnel, Department of Defense civilians and their families on nine installations. Nearly 1,000 Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army Soldiers, or KATUSAs, and more than 3,000 Korean National employees serving alongside U.S. servicemembers in the Seoul area.



Col. Ron Stephens

More than 120 tenant units are based on Yongsan Garrison, the largest U.S. military base in Korea. Whatever unit you are assigned to, it is the mission of USAG-Yongsan to provide community services that you would expect in a small city.

We support warfighters, civilian employees and their families by managing housing, logistics, transportation, public works, Army Community Services, child and youth programs, entertainment, recreation and other essential services.

We also work with the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and other organizations to provide a positive community environment.

This newcomer's guide will help to get you on the fast track for a rich and rewarding tour in the Republic of Korea.

After your initial inprocessing, please be sure to visit Community Services Building on Yongsan South Post. You'll find activities and classes, such as learning the Korean language, parenting skills and many other programs designed to assist you and your family during your time here. For information, call 738-4617.

Please be a good ambassador for America while you are in the Republic of Korea. By learning even a few phrases of the Korean language and getting out and meeting the wonderful Korean people, you will enjoy your tour and also promote good community relations. There is a lot to see and do in this beautiful country and a lot of Korean people will welcome you.

I am looking forward to seeing you in the "Land of the Morning Calm."



PHOTOS, ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID McNALLY

Relics of the Chosun Dynasty, like Gyeongbok Palace, contrast Seoul's history and future.

Seoul offers cosmopolitan life

By David McNally

USAG-Yongsan Public Affairs

SEOUL — It is a modern city with conveniences and culture one might expect to find in any other first-world nation.

There are many things to do and see during a tour of duty in Seoul. Public parks, zoos, mountain trails, museums, temples, cultural activities, concerts and sporting events are just a few examples of what city life offers.

But, life was not always this way in this ancient city.

Before Christopher Columbus set sail for the new world, Seoul was a major city on the Korean peninsula. In fact, historians date the settlement of Seoul to 18 B.C. with the establishment of the Baekje Kingdom. To this day, several city walls remain in Southern Seoul dating from this era.

Today, with more than 11 million inhabitants, the city is a thriving metropolis. It is the economic heart and soul of the Korean people.

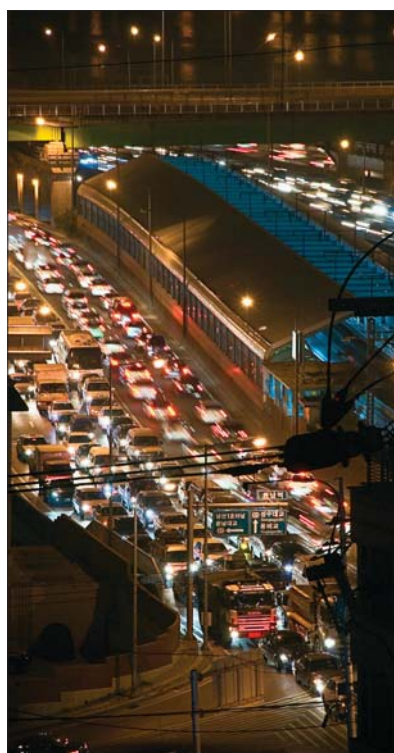
During the Japanese occupation of Korea 1910-45, the city was renamed "Keijo." But, with the end of World War II and eviction of the Japanese, Koreans returned the city to its rightful name.

The people of Seoul suffered greatly during the Korean War, 1950-53. Millions died, and Seoul took the brunt of the destruction. With at least 191,000 buildings, 55,000 houses, and 1,000 factories destroyed in Seoul during the war, residents became homeless refugees left with little more than devastation and hunger.

The Korean people are intelligent and eager to advance. With a literacy rate of 98.6 percent, Korean emphasis on education brings in a large annual harvest of university graduates. The country's top learning centers are all in Seoul.

Twenty four percent of the Republic of Korea's population resides in Seoul and its surrounding suburbs.

From western-style movie theaters and malls, to traditional markets and restaurants, Seoul is a unique city.



Modern Seoul is home to famous traffic jams and easy-to-use subways.



The Korean people embrace their traditions.



Seoul residents walk through a busy market.



Most international travelers arrive in the Republic of Korea at the ultra-modern Incheon Airport.

What to expect when you arrive in Korea

American Forces' Spouses' Club

INCHEON — When you arrive in Korea at Incheon International Airport, one thing is almost certain - you will be tired and wish you were anywhere else rather than dealing with paperwork.

Do not, under any circumstances, try to bring weapons or contraband into Korea. While the customs inspectors are pleasant and helpful, they are also very thorough. Contraband, such as drugs and deer antlers, will get you in trouble not only with the Koreans but also the U.S. Military Police. Weapons should be left in storage.

A military liaison must pick up all Army personnel unless a sponsor has obtained the clearance from the 1st Replacement Company to transport the military member. For information, call 723-6452, or commercial 0505-723-6452. For other servicemembers, a sponsor will need to pick you up, or you will need to find your own transportation to Yongsan Garrison.

At Incheon Airport newcomers are met by an Army liaison. They will meet you in the terminal as you exit your aircraft. The liaison will take you through Customs and Immigration, baggage claim, and will transport you via military bus to Yongsan Garrison (about a one-hour drive).

If you do not see the liaison in the terminal, go through the entire customs and immigration and baggage claim process with your leave form, orders and identification card ready. Make sure they stamp your passport with an entry stamp.

You should look for the U.S. Military Liaison Office located near exits E and F.

After arriving on-post, you will have a short briefing, and then check into your lodging.

If a sponsor is meeting you, be careful not to follow the military liaisons. Even though they are calling for all military members, you will need to go through the regular lines like any other civilian passenger. Once you have completed all customs and immigration formalities, and retrieved luggage, go through the exit door nearest the baggage claim carousel.

There are several exits out of the baggage claim area, so if someone is meeting you, be sure you are at the exit door posted for your flight. If you are unsure which exit is correct, go ahead and depart any exit. You should read the monitors located above the exit doors. Your flight number will be posted with an exit door letter. If you have exited the wrong way, don't worry, you will be able to easily walk to the correct exit.

Once you have met your sponsor, they will most likely take you directly to your lodging. They will also be able to advise you of when and where you need to



Incheon Airport is a thoroughly modern transportation hub for Northeast Asia. The complex is about an hour's drive from Seoul.

go for in-processing.

If for some reason you need to go to Yongsan on your own, go through any of the exit doors. You can either take a taxi (expensive) or the Dragon Hill Lodge shuttle (free) to Yongsan Garrison. If you wish to take the bus, look for signs to the USO desk, located at Gate 14. If the USO desk is open, they can tell you when the bus to Yongsan is departing. Since you will be in PCS (permanent change of station) status, you and your family members will have priority above anyone else wishing to ride the bus, aside from any others in PCS status.

Taxis are located outside the terminal. Army and Air Force Exchange Service taxis have English-speaking drivers. They are the only taxis authorized to come on-post, so it is better to take one of these.

The AAFES taxis, which are black with gold letters, park to the far right as you exit the airport. The AAFES Taxi Stand is in front of Exit Gate 14. For information, call 02-7913-5550. All AAFES taxis have meters, and accept U.S. dollars.

If you must take a Korean taxi, be sure to have Korean currency. Try to select a cab which has clearly visible identification about both the driver and vehicle. A taxi ride to post will cost about \$50-

\$60. The AAFES taxi drivers expect a tip, but Korean taxi drivers do not expect tips.

ALL NEW ARRIVALS

Once you have checked in with your new unit and rested, there are many things you must do during your first days in Korea. These include visiting the housing office, Army Community Services, schools and Child and Youth Services.

Locations for in-processing vary depending upon branch of service. Your military liaison or sponsor should know exactly when and where you will need to go for in-processing. However, the following information is provided for your convenience.

- U.S. Army - Army personnel will need to in-process at 1st Replacement Company (across the parking lot from the Dragon Hill Lodge). Call 723-6452.
- U.S. Air Force - Members of the Air Force will need to in-process with the Air Force Element. Call 723-8389.
- U.S. Navy - Naval personnel begin their time in Yongsan with the Personnel Support Detachment on Main Post. Please call 723-4651.
- U.S. Marine Corps - Marines arriving in Seoul in-process with the Administrative Office on Main Post. For information, call 723-7032.

What do you know about Korea?

American Forces' Spouses' Club

History: Korea is said to have been founded about 4,300 years ago. Its recorded history dates back to 300 B.C. The Republic of Korea was established in 1948.

Language: The Korean written language is referred to as “hangul,” The spoken language is simply called Korean, or “hanguk-mal.”

Geography: Korea is a peninsula thrusting from the northeast Asian mainland in a southerly direction for about 620 miles. The peninsula, contiguous to the two continental powers of China and Russia to the north and nearby oceanic Japan to the south, functioned for a long time as a land bridge through which continental culture was transmitted to Japan.

Its peninsula location has both the advantage of easy access to adjacent cultures and the disadvantage of becoming the target of aggressive neighbors. South Korea shares a land boundary with North Korea of about 150 miles.

Topography: Approximately 70 percent of the Republic of Korea’s land area is comprised of mountains and uplands. Mount Halla (6,396 feet) on Jeju Island is the tallest mountain in the Republic of Korea. The longest rivers are the Nakdong River, the Guem River, and the Han River, which flows through Seoul.

Area: 8,452 square miles (about the size of Indiana)

Climate: Long, cold winters and short, hot, humid summers with late monsoon rains and flooding. Seoul's January mean temperature is -5 degrees C. to -2.5 degrees C.

In July it is 22.5 degrees C. to 25 degrees C. The annual rainfall varies from year to year but usually averages more than 39 inches/100 centimeters. Of that total, two-thirds of the precipitation falls between June and September.

President: Roh Moo-hyun

Capital: Seoul

Monetary Unit: Won

Population: 48,199,227 (2004 estimate)

Largest Cities: Seoul, Busan, Daegu, and Incheon

Religions: Buddhist, Protestant, Catholic, and Confucian

Literacy Rate: More than 98 percent (one of the highest in the world)

Industry: Korea’s workforce is 20 million strong. Fifty-two percent of the labor is in services, while 27 percent is in mining and manufacturing. Exports and major products include agriculture, electronics, machinery, textiles, steel and metal products and chemicals.

Natural Resources: Iron, copper ore, tungsten and graphite

National Bird: Magpie

Yongsan Garrison housing: Home is where the heart is

American Forces' Spouses' Club

YONGSAN GARRISON — Where you will live after your arrival in Korea is undoubtedly one of your largest concerns.

Unaccompanied personnel may be assigned quarters on-post or reside off-post in economy housing. Servicemembers in the pay grade E-4 and below will reside in barracks. Barracks are managed and controlled by unit first sergeants.

Servicemembers in the pay grade E-5, regardless of marital status, and all E-6 personnel will participate in the "Area II Share Program." Bona fide bachelors in the pay grade of E-6 may live alone. All other unaccompanied personnel, E-7 and above, regardless of marital status will live off-post. Personnel will be assigned to an apartment with a minimum of three bedrooms and one to two baths. Both occupants will share the monthly rent. Currently 85 percent of assigned personnel reside off-post.

The Area II Housing Office will try to accommodate personnel serving in key and essential positions who are required to live on-post. Personnel who will reside off-post must attend a mandatory briefing before seeking off-post accommodations.

For on-post family housing, waiting lists are maintained for each housing area. Personnel are placed on the

appropriate list based on their rank, Housing Eligibility Date, bedroom requirement and priority category.

For most personnel, their HED is the date they sign out of their last duty station (See Army Regulation 210-50 for details).

The bedroom requirement is determined by the size of your family. Couples with no children and families (either married couples or single parents) with one child receive two-bedroom units. Families with two children receive three bedroom units and those with three or more children qualify for four bedroom units.

With the exception of Hannam Village, there is generally a waiting list for all types of units. However, the four bedroom waiting list tends to be the longest. You may accept quarters smaller than what you qualify for. This will often decrease your waiting time significantly, however, keep in mind that once you accept a smaller unit it is unlikely you will ever make it to the top of the list for a larger unit. This is because housing priority is determined by which category you fall under, and once you accept any government quarters you are generally bumped down to category three (the lowest level). Since new category two personnel (those authorized concurrent travel) are always arriving, it is difficult to rise to



Sgt. Seo Ki-chul

Residents walk outside Burke Towers, a field-grade officer's complex that opened in 2004. Burke Towers is located within minutes of the schools.

the top of the housing list.

Concurrent travel is determined by the Housing Office and is based upon the projected availability of housing when you are scheduled to arrive. All others are considered priority three.

If housing is not available when you arrive, and you have been approved for concurrent travel, you will be allowed to remain in your hotel up to a maximum of 60 days -- though officials encourage servicemembers to seek off-post housing within 10 days of arrival.

Servicemembers approved for "deferred travel" may secure an off-post apartment while awaiting family housing. Service members residing on the economy are entitled to a monthly Overseas Housing Allowance and Miscellaneous Housing Allowance

received 6-8 weeks after move-in. The MIHA funds are provided to help defray the costs of set up of the off-post residence (i.e., appliance hookup, small furnishings, rugs, utility hookups, etc.)

There are four main housing areas in Yongsan controlled by the U.S. Army and administered by the Korean Housing Management Office, and the floor plans of all the houses are available from the Housing Office.

You can also get housing information online from <http://www.kohomm.org> (click on Housing Info and follow the instructions). None of these units have carpeting.

There is limited parking in these housing areas, with one designated space for each unit and some visitor's spots (all outdoor parking lots).

Taking care of your pets

American Forces' Spouses' Club

YONGSAN GARRISON — There are excellent veterinary services available on Yongsan from the 129th Medical Detachment. Services are available to eligible personnel on an "as time permits" basis. All basic shots are provided at a nominal cost.

The policy for importation of privately owned animals into Korea requires the following:

- Health Certificate, less than 10 days old, when arriving into Korea. The original plus two copies.

- Rabies Certificate (the original plus two copies). The vaccination must be current and at least 30 days old.

Distemper is a problem here in Korea so it is recommended that you not bring a pet that is not fully vaccinated (at least 6 months or older). Animals arriving without a current rabies vaccination or one that is less than 30 days old will be quarantined at the owner's expense for up to a maximum of 30 days.

- Bill of Lading or Certificate of Excess Baggage with original signature (if the animal is traveling unaccompanied).

For information, call 738-4261, or from the United States, 011-822-7918-4261.

Spouses network helps adjustment

USAG-Yongsan Public Affairs

YONGSAN GARRISON — Family members traveling to Korea can expect to find a world of change and adjustments. However, organizations like the American Forces' Spouses' Club aim to make everyone feel at home during a tour of duty in the Republic of Korea.

Organizations like AFSC provide a framework for networking with other spouses.

The AFSC runs a unique store on Yongsan Garrison South Post, the "Chosun Gift Shop."

Spouses travel throughout the Far East to purchase items in bulk for resale at the shop. The organization raises thousands of dollars for charity each year.

Spouses also have opportunities to serve as volunteers with the American Red Cross and Army Community Services.

Paid employment is also an option. According to AFSC, there are limited jobs available on post; it may take some time and patience to find one, but with determination and a lot of networking, it can be done.

Full-time or part-time jobs are listed through the Seoul Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and advertised in a weekly bulletin. Army Community Services has a Family Member Employment office, with an excellent staff to assist your job search. They are located in the ACS Building (Building 4106 on Yongsan South Post). For information, call 738-8977. There is also a Hannam Village Outreach Center at 723-8293. Spouse Employment and Education Seminars are held semiannually. Look for banners and advertisements in the Morning Calm Weekly about the next seminar. These Web sites can also provide more information:

- Civilian Human Resources Agency at <http://cpoc-www.korea.army.mil>

- U.S. Army Civilian Personnel Online at <http://cpol.army.mil>

Teachers are always needed. If you want to teach at the Seoul American Elementary, Middle or High Schools, either full-time or on a substitute basis, ask at the main office of the school where you want to work.

Teaching positions are also available at the private schools in Seoul; you can either write the schools directly or contact them as soon as you arrive in Korea. They often will advertise in The Morning Calm Weekly or on bulletin boards at the Commissary, Post Exchange and Town House Food Court.

It is suggested that you review any contracts carefully with the ACS Employment Readiness staff before accepting any position. Also, even though you will have 90 days to obtain a Status of Forces Agreement stamp in your passport, you must have it in your possession before you apply for a job.

For youth, a Summer Youth Employment Program is available for military and civilian family members who are full-time students between the ages of 14 and 22. Although many of the jobs are general office helpers, there are also a variety of specialized areas where specific skills and background are required. Parents and students are reminded that one requirement to be eligible for summer employment with USFK activities is to possess a personal Social Security Number. Parents whose children are outside of Korea should ensure that their children obtain a SSN before traveling to Korea if they wish to work here during the summer. Students must also have proof of full-time student status in the States.

There is also a winter-hire program for students ages 16-22. This is designed for after school and weekend work.

For youth or spouses planning to work on the economy, check with ACS before coming to see what type of visa is needed. For information, contact the ACS Employment Readiness Program Office at 738-8977.

(Editor's note: The American Forces' Spouses' Club contributed to this article)

Planning your move to Korea

American Forces' Spouses' Club

YONGSAN GARRISON — It is important your advance planning be as comprehensive as possible, in order to avoid stress upon arrival.

Take a trip to your Army Community Services, Air Force Family Service Center or Navy and Marine Family Service Center to check on relocation packets.

Also, be sure to look in your local bookstore or library and on the Internet for assistance.

As time draws closer to your move, and you have not heard from a sponsor, definitely take the initiative and contact your gaining unit, either by letter or telephone, for a relocation packet.

A sponsor should be assigned automatically. Korea is an assignment where a sponsor is necessary and is a relocating family's biggest asset. Your sponsor can get your mailing address, start the paperwork for temporary ration

cards and check availability of quarters before you come.

Visit these Internet sites to learn more about relocation and life in Korea:

■ U.S. Army Garrison-Yongsan: <http://yongsan.korea.army.mil> – This Web site is a great location for current community information. It includes a telephone directory, local news and links to the Morning Calm Weekly newspaper and Community Connection magazine. Many of your questions about life on Yongsan can be answered here.

■ <http://www.usfk.mil> - This new Web site should be the starting point for all servicemembers, civilians and families serving in U.S. Forces Korea.

■ <http://8tharmy.korea.army.mil> – This contains an electronic Welcome Guide and ROK Steady magazine.

■ <http://www.kohomm.org> - This is the Web site for on-post housing in Korea. You can see floor plans and get other information about housing.

■ <http://www.oconus.com/main/korea.asp> - This site includes many specific links to different bases in Korea.

■ <http://www.ameriforce.net/relocation/> - This Web site includes an eight-week PCS checklist for moving to Korea, as well as many tips on family travel to Korea.

■ <http://www.afcrossroads.com/home.cfm> - This has a searchable database on installations, PCS, family and pet travel tips.

■ <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites/owa/ShowPage?p=index> - This has relocation information on major military installations (you will need to provide your sponsor's social security number, last name, and birth date for access).

■ <http://www.defenselink.mil/mapsite/relocate.html> - This has helpful tips on relocation.

■ DOD "It's Your Move": <http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/itsyourmove/> - This has PCS articles and the "It's Your Move" pamphlet.

Shopping with a Ration Control Card

American Forces' Spouses' Club

YONGSAN GARRISON — The most important thing you need besides a great pair of walking shoes is a Ration Control Card.

Your Ration Control Card is just as important as your Military identification. In layman's terms, it is a card that most on-post businesses, like Army and Air Force Exchange, commissary and the Chosun Gift Shop, need to see before you can make purchases.

Officials want to make sure you are not purchasing huge quantities of any item in order to resell. Your Sponsor should be able to provide you with a temporary card when you arrive. However, many don't and it's a rude awaking when you just want to grab a magazine or some aspirin at the Shoppette, and they will not allow you to make a purchase without it.

You will need to go with your sponsor to get temporary ration cards. The Law and Order, Ration Control Issue Point is located on South Post, at Headquarters, U.S. Army Garrison-Yongsan, Bldg. 4305, Room #105. For information, call 738-4612.

You will need a Ration Control Card for each authorized family member (children 10 and up).

Don't leave home without it.

During their first two weeks in Korea, family members can shop in the commissary and exchange with a military identification card and a copy of their sponsor's PCS orders.

Family members with sponsors assigned to 2nd Infantry Division need to contact the Division Liaison Office at the 1st Replacement Detachment across the parking lot of the Dragon Hill Lodge for a Ration Control Card.

Family members have a lot of things to do in the first few days to get settled in. It is highly recommended that you go to the Army Community Services Building as soon as you can. They have a fantastic staff ready to help you.

The ACS Building will be your new home away from home.

Carry your military identification, ration control card, many copies of orders, a Power of Attorney and your passport with you wherever you go for the first two weeks. It is also helpful to call before you go to verify information and to check hours of operation; this can help cut down on your frustration and save valuable time. The best thing to do is make a tentative game plan the day before and map out where you need to go each day so you can get it done quickly and have more family time.

Yongsan schools set high standards

American Forces' Spouses' Club

YONGSAN GARRISON — If you are coming to Korea as a command-sponsored family, your children will be eligible to attend Department of Defense Dependent Schools located on Yongsan South Post.

Noncommand-sponsored children are accommodated on a space available basis. Seoul American Elementary School, Seoul American Middle School and Seoul American High School are fully accredited schools that offer a wide variety of classes and services, including classes for the gifted, Special Education, and English as a Second Language.

School registration is held in May and continues through the summer.

Also, there are several other schools for foreigners located in Seoul, which offer a variety of curriculum.

Only a sponsor or spouse may register children for school.

Hand-carry all school records with you when you travel. You can only register for school when you are physically in Korea. For information call 738-7707.

For registration you will need the following:

■ Shot Records - The 121st General Hospital Immunization Clinic will make sure that they are up to date.

■ A copy of the sponsor's orders verifying command sponsorship (must have dependents' names on orders) .

■ High School-students entering high school need to report to room 108 in the high school to sign up for classes with the guidance counselor.

■ Kindergarten and 1st grade students entering school need to bring a copy of their birth certificate or passport. Bus transportation is provided for students who live within designated limits. For current information, contact the Bus Transportation Office, located in Bldg: 4106 Room 121, at 738-5032. Bus passes will be issued only to a parent. You will need to show paperwork verifying your student is registered.

Currently on Yongsan there are several families who choose to educate their children at home. Finding information on the regulations in reference to the SOFA agreement and home schooling can be obtained from the Home School Legal Defense or the DODDS system.

Also available while home schooling in Korea is a program called I.D.E.A. International. It is an independent organization funded by a DOD grant that operates in partnership with the DODDS system. The program provides assistance to families who are entitled to tuition-free education at a DODDS school, but choose to home school. Information about the program is online at <http://www.intidea.org>.

Home school supplies are also available at the post exchange, or they can be ordered from the Internet.

There are three schooling options on post for preschool age children:

Sure Start is a program designated for children at possible risk, between the ages 3 and 4 whose parents are in the pay grade E-7 or GS-6 and below. The school is run five days per week from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. There is no fee for enrollment, however, parents are encouraged to commit to a minimum number of volunteer hours, call 736-4378 for more info.

The Yongsan Child Development Center offers a part-day preschool program for children ages 3 to 5. There is a three-day program and a two-day program from 8-11:30 a.m. during the school year.

Register at Central Registration (738-5036) and they can provide information about availability and schedule of fees based on pay grade.

Mustard Seed Christian Preschool is a South Post Chapel program. Classes for four-year olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. Classes for three-year olds meet on Tuesday and Thursday. Classes are offered both in the morning (8:15-11:15 a.m.) and afternoon (12:15-3:15 p.m.)

Register as soon as possible, as spaces for this school fill quickly. To check for current information call 738-8503 or 738-4220.

■ Korea District Superintendent's Office Web Site: <http://www.korea.pac.dodea.edu>

■ Seoul Elementary School Web Site: http://www.seoul_es.pac.dodea.edu

■ Seoul Middle School (grades 6-8) Web Site: http://www.seoul_ms.pac.dodea.edu

■ Seoul High School (grades 9-12) Web Site: http://www.seoul_hs.pac.dodea.edu

School Registration: DODDS Seoul Registration Office – 738-7707 (at ACS).

Off-Post Schools:

■ Centennial Christian School (K-12), 57 Ehwa-dong, Chongno-gu, Seoul 110-500, call 762-3160.

■ International Christian School (K-12), P.O. Box 62 SRCO, Seoul 140-600, call 792-4116/7.

■ Seoul Academy (K-8), Young-dong, P.O. Box 85, Seoul, call 554-1690.

■ Seoul Foreign School (K-12), 55 Yunhi-dong, Suhdaemoon-gu, Seoul 120-113, call 335-5101/5.

■ Seoul International School (K-12), Songpa-gu, P.O. Box 47, Seoul, Korea 138-600, call 233-4551/2.